

Claim Amendments:

1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (New) A food dehydrator including a basket for retaining a food product to be dehydrated, said basket comprising:

a) a first grate defined by spaced vertically extending parallel rods extending between a first transverse rod at the upper end of the grate and a second transverse rod at the lower end of the first grate;

b) a second grate defined by spaced horizontally extending parallel rods extending between a first side member and a second side member situated parallel to each other on opposite sides of the second grate;

c) at least one hinge clip secured to the lower ends of said first and second grates to permit pivotal movement of said grates;

d) extensions formed on the opposite ends of said first transverse rod of one of said grates, and anchors formed on the first and second side members of the other of said grates;

e) said extensions and said anchors being located at different elevations along the vertical extent of said basket; and

f) springs extending at an acute angle between said anchors and said extensions to bias one of said grates upwardly toward the other grate and securely retain the food product placed within the perimeter of the basket.

13. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 12, wherein said extensions are formed at the opposite ends of said first transverse rod at the upper end of said first grate.

14. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 12, wherein said anchors are formed on said first side member and said second side member of said second grate.

15. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 12, wherein said handle is joined to the transverse rod of said first grate, said handle comprising a horizontally oriented arm with a first and a second leg depending therefrom toward the transverse rod at the bottom of said first grate.

16. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 12, further comprising a racking grid, said racking grid comprising at least one spine with pins projecting upwardly therefrom, and means on said basket to receive said upstanding pins and lock said basket in a vertical orientation.

17. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 16, wherein said means on said basket to receive the upstanding pins comprises receptacle tubes that slip over said pins.

18. (New) A food dehydrator as defined in claim 16, wherein said rack further includes two spaced spines, extending parallel to one another.